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# FY 2004 SUPERFUND ANNUAL REPORT

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## Introduction

Congress created the Superfund program to address the immediate threats posed by hazardous substances, pollutants, and contaminants. To limit exposures across the country, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA or the Agency) undertakes a variety of Superfund response actions. From providing alternative water supplies for communities to performing residential yard cleanups, the Superfund program continues to protect public health and safety. The Superfund program is important because it may be the best defense against direct human exposure to the contamination at these sites, assures the protection of those who work and live nearby sites, and is a principal source of information on the risks at these sites.

The purpose of this report is to communicate the progress of the Superfund program in Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 (October 1-September 30, 2004). EPA prepared this report in an ongoing effort to provide the public with information on Superfund. The Superfund program is constantly adjusting to respond to the new realities facing the program. As part of that response, EPA conducted several studies to improve the program. In the spring of 2002, EPA convened the Superfund Subcommittee under the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology to provide a public dialogue on the future directions of the Superfund program. The Subcommittee completed its work on March 31, 2004, and transmitted the approved Subcommittee report (["Final Report: Superfund Subcommittee of the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology"](#)) to the Administrator on May 6, 2004. The report contained 17 consensus recommendations regarding: (1) the role of the Superfund program in addressing "megsites;" (2) program policy for listing sites on the National Priorities List (including megasites); and (3) performance measures that effectively communicate program accomplishments. In part, this report responds to recommendations in the "Final Report: Superfund Subcommittee of the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology" and another internal study, ["Superfund: Building on the Past, Looking to the Future."](#) EPA also established a Superfund Board of Directors to provide leadership in implementing recommendations of the 120-Day study. The Agency developed action plans available on EPA's Superfund web site (<http://www.epa.gov/superfund/action/120day/index.htm>) and priority tasks are proceeding in FY 2005.

Today, EPA is working to increase community participation; strengthen public and private partnerships; enhance cleanup effectiveness and consistency in program implementation; streamline the enforcement process and optimize the use of fairness initiatives (e.g., orphan share, de minimis settlements); encourage beneficial reuse and revitalization of sites following cleanup; and ensure that remedies continue to protect human health. Additionally, because construction is complete at many sites, a new emphasis on long-term stewardship at these sites is required.

Working with States, Tribes, communities, local governments, and many other stakeholders, during FY 2004, the Superfund program:

- completed construction at 40 sites across the country for a total of 926 sites or 61 percent of the sites on the National Priorities List,
- conducted 678 long-term, ongoing cleanup projects at 428 sites (includes EPA funded sites, responsible party-lead sites, and Federal facility sites); and
- secured \$680 million in cleanup commitments and cost recoveries from the private parties responsible for toxic waste sites.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that terms of art or words that may not be commonly understood to readers (such as "National Priorities List") are defined in Appendix B, the glossary, if they appear more than once in this report. If they appear only once, such terms of art or unfamiliar words are defined where they appear.

The Superfund program spent \$507 million for construction and post-construction activities and to conduct and oversee emergency response actions. This figure includes \$367 million for construction and post-construction projects, and \$140 million for 385 removal actions to address immediate and substantial threats to communities. EPA also collaborated with its partners to address immediate and long-term dangers and to ensure that the cleanup remedies selected remain effective.

EPA and its partners continue to identify new threats to human health and the environment. In 2004, EPA listed 11 new sites on the National Priorities List, and proposed 26 sites. The Superfund program spent \$228 million to conduct and oversee: site assessments and investigations, selection and design of cleanup plans, and support for State, Tribal, community involvement and other activities. EPA selected final cleanup plans at 30 sites, bringing the cumulative total of sites with final cleanup plans to approximately 66 percent of the 1,529 National Priorities List sites.

While Superfund's accomplishments are significant, challenges remain. As the Superfund program matures, the size, complexity and cost of sites that are underway or ready to begin construction continue to grow. EPA is subdividing megasites to address the high-risk areas of those sites first and provide for more effective management of resources. In FY 2004, EPA committed more than 52 percent of the Superfund obligations for long-term, ongoing cleanup work to just nine sites. Consequently, more sites were ready for construction than funds available to start work.

Within these pages, stakeholders will find summaries and highlights of site progress, explanations of the criteria applied and reasons behind listing decisions, expenditures by fiscal year, and descriptions of trends. This report is designed to provide context for program accomplishments, summarize challenges, and outline future directions of the Superfund program.